

SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE  
PARIS, FRANCE

THE WHITE HOUSE  
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March 9, 1962

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of all of those who have worked directly on the Berlin air traffic problem since February, as well as myself, I thank you for the very generous comments in your letter of 26 February. We are all pleased that you feel the action we have taken has been in compliance with your thoughts and has furthered your objectives. As you probably know, the Governments of the United Kingdom and France have also been quite satisfied with the manner in which these operations have been conducted. As a matter of fact, we believe that there has been greater harmony and a clearer sense of common purpose in this particular exercise than in almost any other field in which the three countries have worked together over a period of at least several months.

We will in due time seek a limited number of awards or decorations for those whose work has been particularly outstanding but now plan to hold this in abeyance until this issue has been settled. It is our view that just the fact of publicly recognizing with official decorations some of the participants would in itself tend to magnify the incident. However, I do think there should be some important and immediate recognition, and since you were kind enough to suggest that you would send personal notes, I suggest that you address a letter to General Truman H. Landon, Commander-in-Chief, United States Air Forces Europe, through the Secretary of the Air Force, asking him to convey to all the crews involved your appreciation for a job well done. Since one particular airplane probably "broke the back" of the most serious part of the Soviet operations, those conducted on February 15th, I would suggest that in the letter to Landon you specifically refer to the outstanding courage and professional skill of 1st Lieutenant Malcolm W. Lindsay, and his crew consisting of: Co-pilot, 2d Lieutenant William T. Fuller; Navigator, 1st Lieutenant Butler R. Dillon; 1st Flight Engineer, MSgt Harvey E. Henderson; 2d Flight Engineer, TSgt Abraham Zendejas; Load Master,

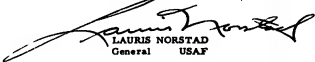
A1C Billy R. Ingram; Radio Operator, A1C Frank R. Cervenky; and Airborne Mechanic, SSgt Harvey Burniston. They demonstrated not only outstanding professional ability but, what is more important, soldierly qualities of the highest tradition.

I have been tremendously impressed with the complete cooperation of Pan American and with the fact that, even in the danger areas and at the critical times, the Pan American crews not only have been willing to fly aircraft but have in fact asked to do so. A brief note or a telephone call to Juan Trippe, or other high official of Pan American, would certainly be well deserved. I see no problem on this from the commercial standpoint since there is no American competition on this particular route.

Although the air traffic problem continues, at least for the time being it does not appear dangerous. There has been much speculation as to the Soviet motives and I suppose anyone's idea on this may have some validity. My own thought is that this started out as a reminder that Berlin is a problem and as an attempt to undermine the confidence, particularly of the West Berliners, in the one secure means of transportation. Perhaps it continues for one or both of these reasons, although a new factor may have been added; that is, the difficulty of discontinuing something that has not proved to be a success.

Again I wish to thank you for the thoughtfulness of your letter and to send my respects and warmest regards.

Faithfully,



LAURIS NORSTAD  
General USAF

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.